

MAR 10 2015

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING JUNETEENTH NATIONAL FREEDOM DAY ON JUNE 19 OF EACH
YEAR.

1 WHEREAS, more than one hundred thirty years old, Juneteenth
2 National Freedom Day is the oldest and only African-American
3 holiday observance in the United States; and
4

5 WHEREAS, also known as Emancipation Day, Emancipation
6 Celebration, Freedom Day, Jun-Jun, and Juneteenth, Juneteenth
7 National Freedom Day commemorates the strong survival instinct
8 of African-Americans who were first brought to this country
9 stacked in the bottom of slave ships in a month-long journey
10 across the Atlantic Ocean known as the Middle Passage; and
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12 WHEREAS, approximately 11.5 million African-Americans
13 survived the voyage to the New World - the number that died is
14 likely greater - only to be subjected to whipping, castration,
15 branding, and rape, and forced to submit to slavery for more
16 than two hundred years after arrival in the United States; and
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18 WHEREAS, events in the history of the United States that
19 led to the Civil War of 1861 centered around sectional
20 differences between the North and South that were based on the
21 economic and social divergence caused by the existence of
22 slavery; and
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24 WHEREAS, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as President of
25 the United States in 1861, and as President, Lincoln believed
26 and stated that the paramount object of the Civil War was to
27 save the Union rather than save or destroy slavery; and
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29 WHEREAS, Lincoln also stated his wish that all men
30 everywhere could be free, thus adding to a growing anticipation
31 by slaves that their ultimate liberation was at hand; and
32



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1 WHEREAS, in 1862, the first clear sign that the end of
2 slavery was imminent came when laws abolishing slavery in the
3 territories of Colorado, Nebraska, New Mexico, and Oklahoma were
4 passed; and

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6 WHEREAS, in September of that same year, President Lincoln
7 warned the eleven rebellious Confederate States that if they did
8 not return to the Union by January 1, 1863, he would declare
9 their slaves forever free via the celebrated Emancipation
10 Proclamation; and

11
12 WHEREAS, enforcement of the Emancipation Proclamation,
13 however, only occurred in Confederate States once under Union
14 Army control, and Congress subsequently passed the Thirteenth
15 Amendment to the Constitution on January 31, 1865, abolishing
16 slavery throughout the United States and its territories; and

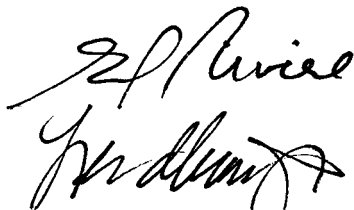
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18 WHEREAS, news of this action reached the states at
19 different times, and it was not until June 19, 1865, that the
20 message of freedom reached the slaves in Arkansas, California,
21 Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas; and

22
23 WHEREAS, spontaneous celebrations erupted throughout the
24 country when African-Americans learned of their freedom; and

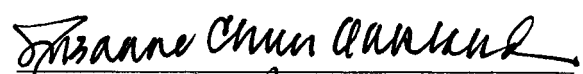
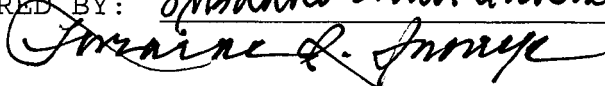
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26 WHEREAS, Juneteenth National Freedom Day celebrates the
27 abolishment of slavery with excitement and great joy and is a
28 reminder to all Americans of the status and importance of
29 Americans of African descent as American citizens; now,
30 therefore,

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32 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-eighth
33 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2015, the
34 House of Representatives concurring, that this body recognizes
35 Juneteenth National Freedom Day on June 19 of each year; and

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37 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this
38 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the Governor.

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OFFERED BY:

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Cheng H. Bok
Rau E. Bok

